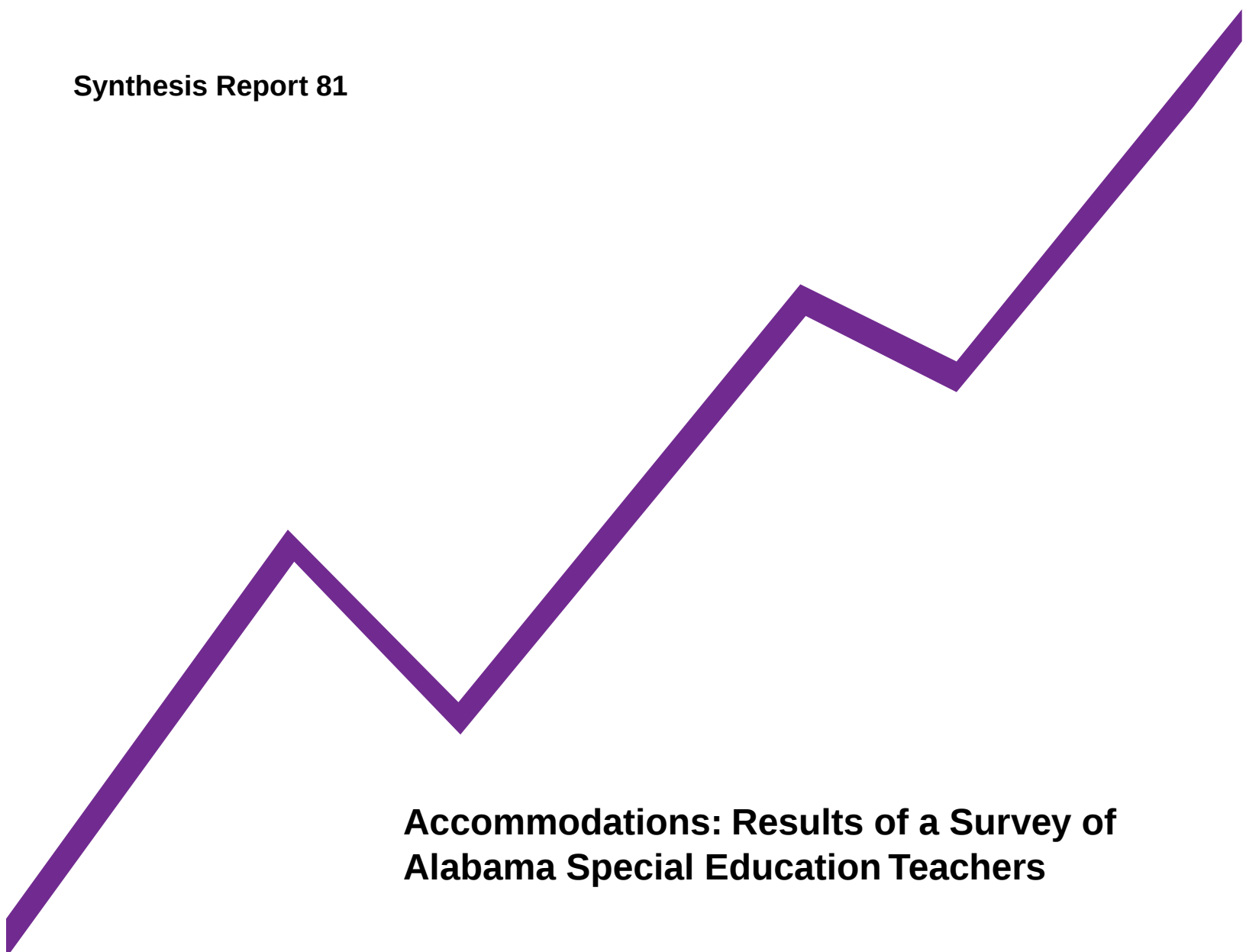




Accommodations: Results of a Survey of Alabama Special Education Teachers



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Accommodations: Results of a Survey of Alabama Special Education Teachers

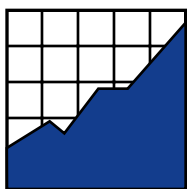
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Executive Summary

This report contains the findings from a survey of 2,336 special education teachers in the state of Alabama on making and implementing decisions about accommodations. Key findings included:

- When making instructional accommodations decisions 51% of the survey respondents considered student characteristics as an important factor. Only 12% of respondents considered student's performance in the classroom to be an important factor.
- Almost half of the respondents took into consideration whether instructional accommodations would facilitate access to the curriculum.
- The respondents were more than twice as likely to consider student characteristics than student needs that impede success in class when determining instructional accommodations.
- The most frequently provided assessment accommodations were small group/individual administration, administration by student's special education teacher, extended time, and administration in the special education classroom.
- More than one-third of the teachers considered state policies and guidelines to be an important factor when making assessment accommodations decisions.
- Student input was rarely considered to be an important factor in the accommodations process by the survey respondents.
- Nearly two-thirds of the respondents indicated that the use of an assessment accommodation should correspond to its use as an instructional accommodation.

A number of areas of strength were noted in the survey responses provided by this large sample of Alabama special education teachers. The special education teachers who responded to the survey demonstrated overall knowledge of accommodations use, despite the challenging items presented to them. Nevertheless, there is an evident need for professional development on making accommodations decisions and on implementing accommodations for instruction and assessment.

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Overview

Teachers and other Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members use a variety of strategies when they make decisions about instructional and assessment accommodations. Instructional accommodations are changes and supports that enable students with disabilities to meaningfully access the curriculum during instruction (Thurlow, Thompson, & Lazarus, 2006). As stated by Nolet and McLaughlin (2005), “deciding on accommodations requires that teachers have a sound knowledge of key constructs—the facts, skills and concepts—embedded in a specific lesson or instructional unit” (p. 85). Assessment accommodations are changes in testing materials and procedures that enable students with disabilities to meaningfully participate in an assessment in a way that allows the student’s knowledge and skills to be assessed rather than the student’s disabilities (Thurlow, Elliott, & Ysseldyke, 2003; Thurlow et al. 2006).

For accommodations to be successfully implemented in both settings teachers need to understand the relationship between instruction and assessment. Assessment accommodations and instructional accommodations are closely linked in that accommodations used by a student during assessment should have previously been used in instruction. In addition, teachers must also understand the role of IEPs, and the legal basis for accommodations in order to make consistent and defensible decisions.

The 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) included language specific to students with disabilities, inclusion in assessment systems, and accommodations. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) reinforced and extended previous legislation, requiring the participation of all students, including students with disabilities, in statewide assessments used for accountability purposes. The 2004 reauthorization of IDEA (U.S. Department of Education, 2004) clarified the previous legislation and sought to align IDEA and ESEA requirements (Lazarus, Thurlow, Lail, & Christensen, 2009). More recent regulations have continued this clarification effort. For example, the 2007 ESEA regulations that addressed alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAS) indicated that states must “develop, disseminate information on, and promote the use of appropriate accommodations to increase the number of students with disabilities who are tested against academic achievement standards for the grade in which a student is enrolled” (U.S. Department of Education, 2007, Sec. 200.6(a) (1) (ii)(A)).

Recent studies have shown that the provision of accommodations is variable across students, classrooms, and schools depending on the accommodations, educational context, and a student’s demographic characteristics (Bottsford-Miller, 2008; Cormier, Altman, Shyyan, & Thurlow, 2010; Maccini & Gagnon, 2006) and that certain accommodations are used more often than others (Cawthon, 2006; Cox, Herner, Demczyk, & Nieberding, 2006; Gibson, Haeberlie, Glover, & Witter, 2005). Finizio (2008) found that a student’s assessment accommodations more fre-

quently mirror accommodations used for instruction than in the past. However, teachers often still are unclear on the definition and use of certain accommodations (Byrnes, 2008). According to Atchison (2008), there is a need to improve the training and resources available to teachers on accommodations and accommodations decision making.

Numerous studies have found that accommodations decisions often are made inconsistently and that accommodations are administered haphazardly (see for example, Fuchs, Fuchs, Eaton, Hamlett, & Karns, 2000; Langley & Olsen, 2003; Lazarus, Thompson, & Thurlow, 2005; Rhode Island Department of Education, 2002) if they are provided at all (DeStefano, Shriner, & Lloyd, 2001; Lazarus et al., 2005; Thurlow, Lazarus, & Christensen, 2008).

It is clear that teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and decisions set the tone for how students use accommodations to access the curriculum in school and the content of a test. Many schools do not have a plan of action for accommodations decision making and use. As a result, special and general education teachers may have very different understandings of the role of accommodations—which can lead to poor decisions. Even among special education teachers, those who teach in different classroom settings—that is, general education classroom, co-teach (inclusion), resource room, self-contained classroom—may have different perceptions of the role of accommodations. This report presents the results of a survey of Alabama special education teachers. The survey was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. Which factors influence IEP team decisions about how accommodations are used for instruction and assessment?
2. Are there differences in the factors and considerations identified by respondents for selecting instructional and assessment accommodations?
3. What are the most frequently used accommodations for instruction and assessment?

Procedure

The Alabama Department of Education, with support from the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO), developed a survey of special education teachers in Alabama on the factors and considerations affecting accommodations decisions for instruction and assessment. The instrument also asked questions about test day logistics. Some of the survey questions were similar to questions in an instrument originally developed for the Education Policy Reform Research Institute (EPRRI) (Lazarus et al., 2005). The survey was piloted with a small group of special education teachers in Alabama and then revised based on information from the pilot. The final survey was administered online using the Survey Monkey tool. See Appendix A for a copy of the survey instrument.

Local education agency (LEA) administrators in the state of Alabama received an email announcing the survey; the announcement included the web address for the Survey Monkey tool where the survey could be accessed. The email asked the administrators to invite special education teachers in their LEA to participate. The email was designed so that it could be forwarded to the special education teachers. Teachers completed the survey between March and May 2009.

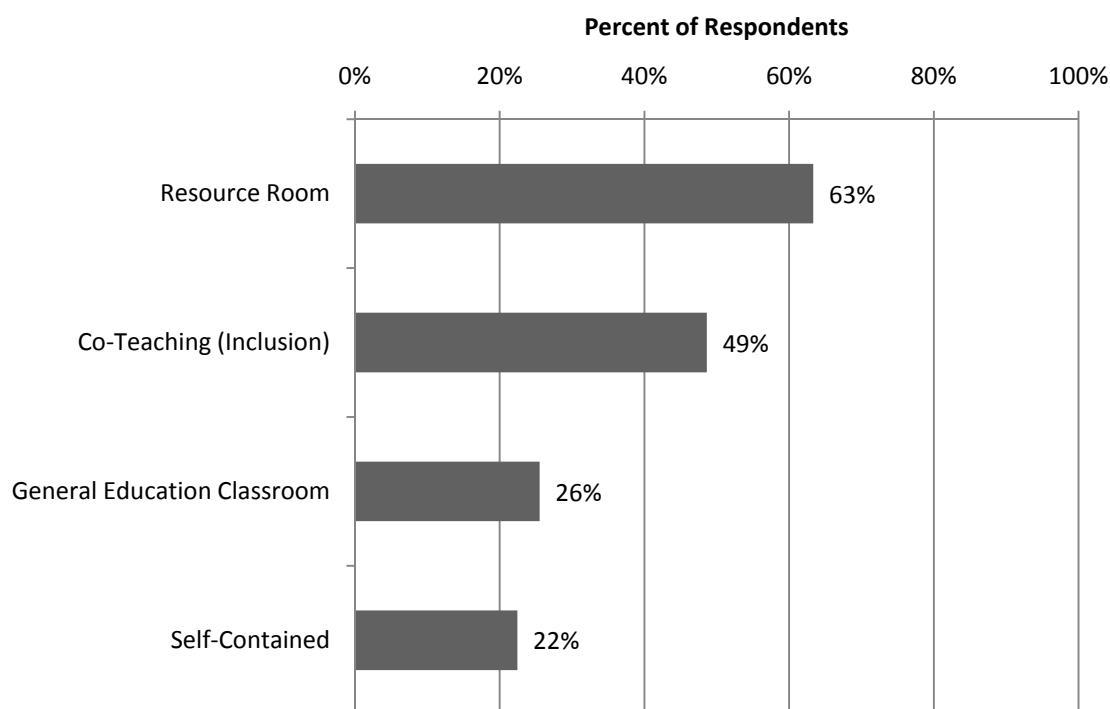
There were 2,575 respondents to the survey; 2,336 were special education teachers. Other respondents included paraprofessionals, adapted physical education teachers, and a few administrators. After the responses were compiled, contact information—including school district names—were verified by state department of education personnel to help ensure that the information was entered into the data base consistently and accurately. Responses from non-special education teachers were not included in this analysis

Counts and percentages were tabulated for each survey item and presented in different formats seen in the results section and Appendix B. The data collected through the survey do not allow for inferential statistics due to the population not being randomly sampled and both demographic (e.g., teaching setting and grade level) and survey items not necessarily being mutually exclusive. These limitations to the data also restrict the ability to use non-parametric methods such as Chi-Square tests for statistically significant differences between groups in item responses. Thus, when comparisons are made between groups, descriptive results are presented and noteworthy differences are highlighted only if they meet an arbitrary threshold of a 4% difference from the entire sample's mean percentage. This criterion was selected because, for an item that allows for only a single response, a 4% difference in responding would represent a difference of approximately 100 teachers given the aforementioned sample size of nearly 2,500 respondents. The mean overall percentage for each item was used as a reference point because it is an indicator of the central tendency of the population of special education teachers. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, a deviation equal to or greater than 4% from the overall mean of the population is to be considered a substantial difference between a particular group of teachers and the type of responding seen collectively from teachers.

Results

The special education teachers were asked which classroom setting served as the context for the majority of their instruction. Teachers were able to select more than one option. Sixty-three percent of respondents indicated that they taught in a resource room setting for at least part of their work day (see Figure 1). Almost half were in co-teaching (inclusion) settings for at least part of the day. Fewer respondents indicated that they taught in a general education or self-contained classroom.

Figure 1. Percent of Respondents Who Provide Instruction in Specific Settings

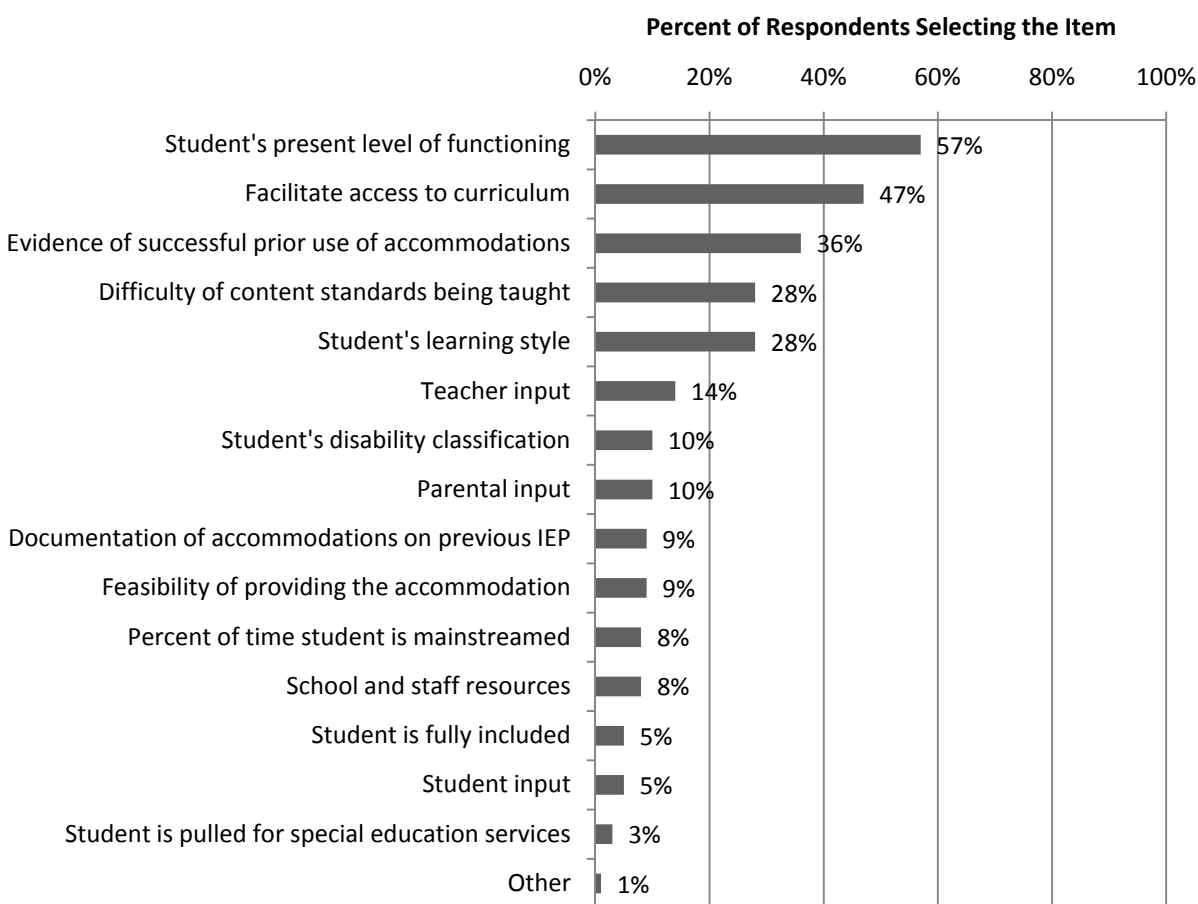


Instructional Accommodations

Special education teachers were asked how IEP teams at their schools determined a student's needs for instructional accommodations. Each teacher was asked to select the three most important considerations. All responses are shown in Figure 2; thus, the percentages add to more than 100%. As shown in Figure 2, the *student's present level of functioning* was selected by 57% of the respondents. Nearly half checked *accommodations will facilitate access to curriculum*. Other frequently selected responses included: *evidence of successful prior use of accommodations*, *difficulty of content standards being taught*, and *student's learning style*.

As indicated in Table B1 in Appendix B, special education teachers who taught in a self-contained setting had a substantially higher percentage of respondents selecting *student's disability classification*, *student's present level of functioning*, and *parental input* when compared to the overall mean percentage of teachers who selected these items. However, the percentage of teachers in self-contained classrooms who selected *accommodations will facilitate access to curriculum* was substantially less than the overall percentage of respondents selecting this item overall. Conversely, general education and co-teaching teachers selected this item 5% more than the overall mean percentage for all teachers.

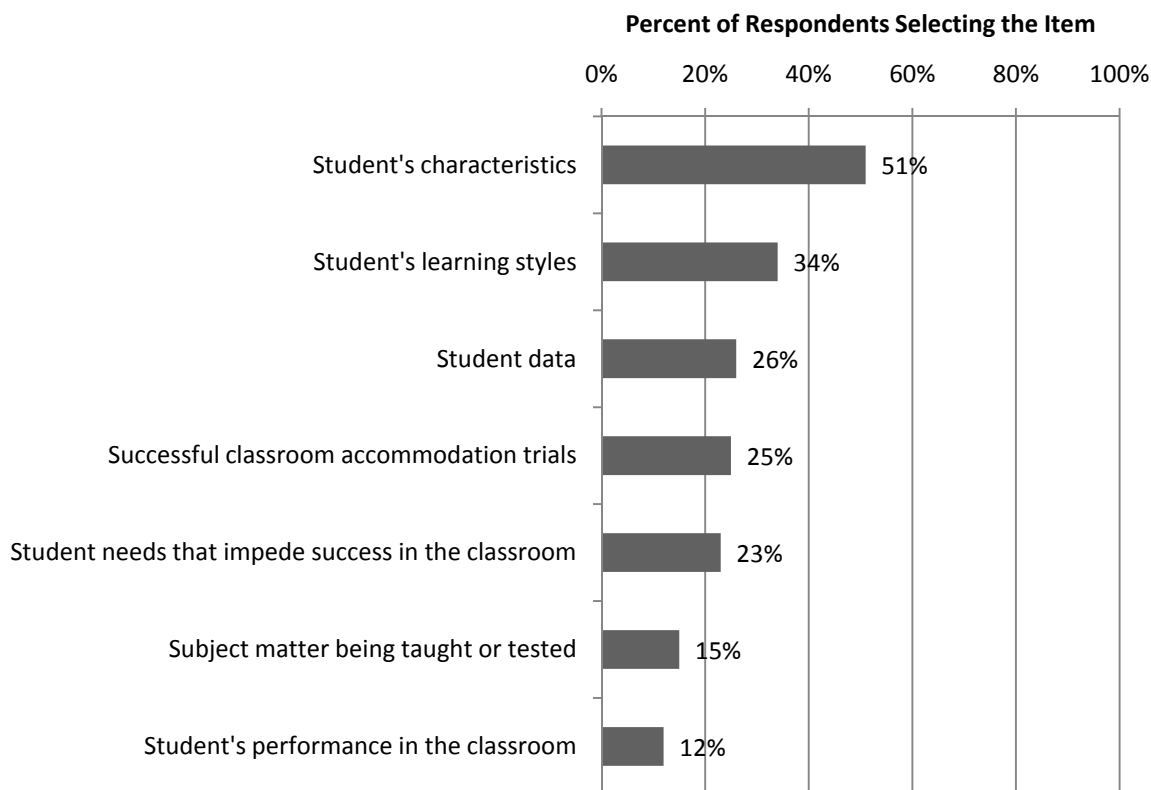
Figure 2. Top Factors for Decision Making on Instructional Accommodations



Respondents were asked to rank from 1 to 7 (with 1 being most important) the considerations used by the IEP team in determining appropriate accommodations for instructional purposes. If a respondent ranked the item 1 or 2, it was coded as “important.” As shown in Figure 3, *student’s characteristics* was ranked as important by 51% of the special education teachers. Thirty-four percent of the respondents ranked *student’s learning styles* as important, while about a quarter of the teachers ranked *student data* and *successful classroom accommodation trials* as important. The totals shown in Figure 3 do not add up to 100% because teachers could rank more than one item.

Table B2 in Appendix B presents additional details about how teachers in different classroom settings responded. As indicated in Table B2, the only substantial deviation from the overall mean was in the case of respondents who taught in a self-contained setting who more frequently selected *student’s performance in the classroom* than teachers in other settings.

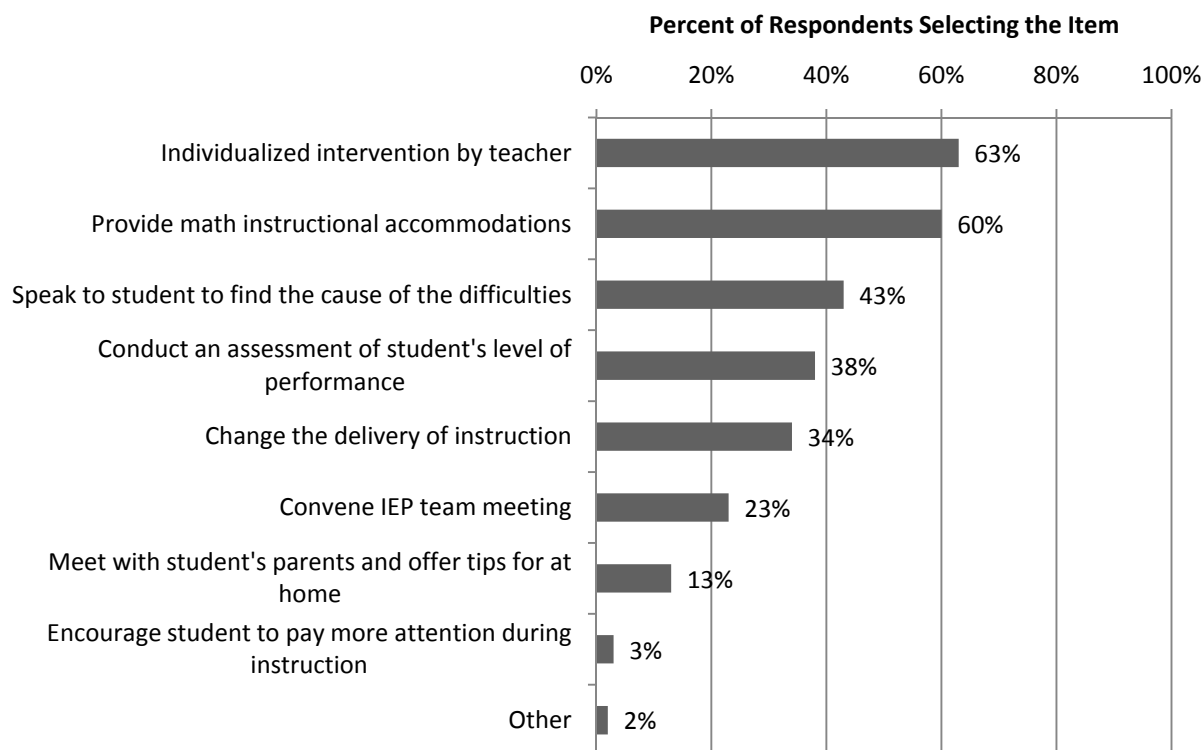
Figure 3. Considerations Reported by Respondents as Most Important in Making Instructional Accommodations Decisions



The survey included a scenario that pertained to the process that a teacher might use for a student who was having difficulty finishing math assignments and was falling behind his or her grade-level peers. Respondents were instructed to select exactly three responses that best represented what they were most likely to do in the given situation. As shown in Figure 4, at least 60 percent of the respondents opted for *individualized intervention by teacher and provide math instructional accommodations*. Other frequently listed responses included *speak to student to find the cause of difficulties* and *conduct an assessment of student's level of performance*. Answer choices that were seldom marked were *meet with the student's parents and offer tips for at home* and *encourage student to pay more attention during instruction*.

As indicated in Table B3 in Appendix B, respondents who taught in a self-contained setting selected *convene an IEP team meeting* less frequently than teachers in other settings. Similarly, teachers in co-teaching settings selected *conduct an assessment of student's level of performance* substantially less than average when compared to other settings, whereas teachers in self-contained settings selected this item substantially more than average. Another noteworthy difference was that co-teaching teachers tended to select *speak with the student to find the cause of his/her difficulties* more frequently than other teachers.

Figure 4. Percentage of Respondents Marking Specific Actions in Response to Instructional Scenario

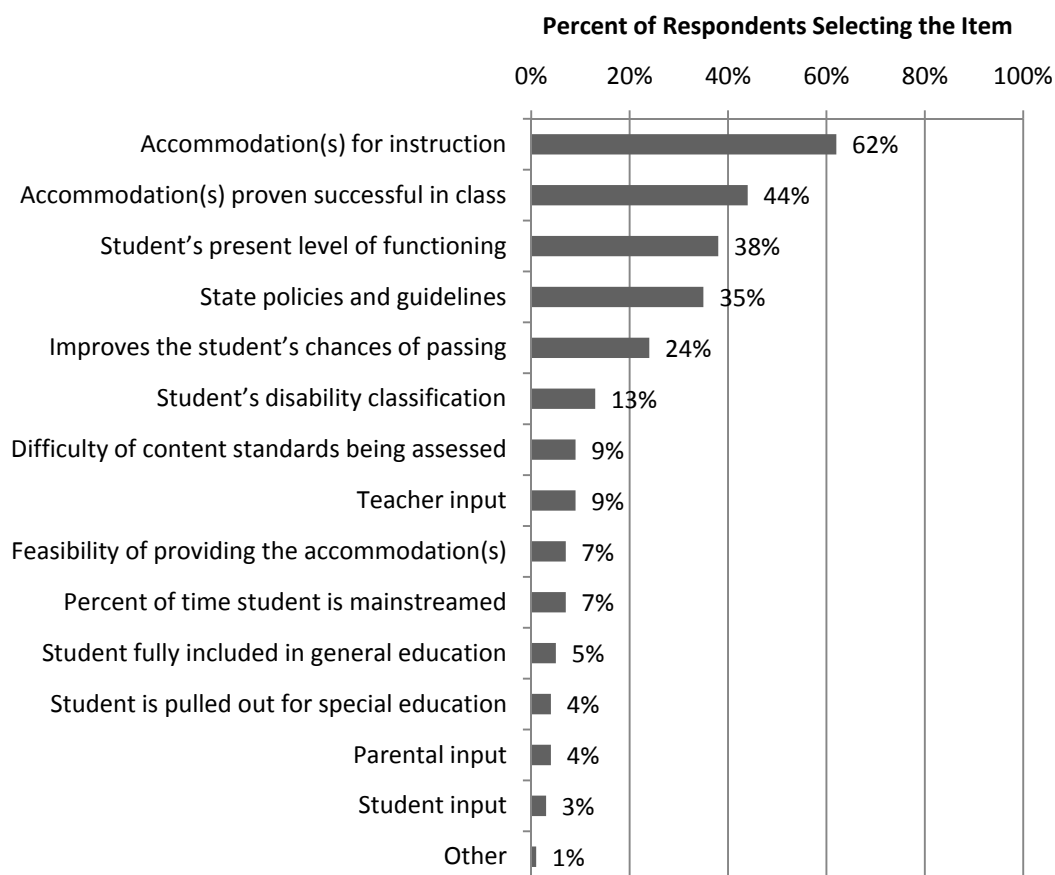


Assessment Accommodations

Respondents were asked to select three factors that influenced IEP team decisions about accommodations used on statewide assessments. As shown in Figure 5, *accommodation(s) for instruction and classroom tests* was selected by 62% of the special education teachers. Also, more than one in three respondents selected the following factors: *accommodation(s) proven successful in class*, *student's present level of functioning*, and *state policies and guidelines*. Only 3% of the teachers considered *student input* to be an important factor.

As indicated by Table B4 in Appendix B, respondents who taught in a self-contained setting more frequently selected *student's present level of functioning* and *difficulty of content standards*, but selected *accommodation(s) used for instruction and classroom tests* substantially less than average. Teachers who taught in co-teaching (inclusion) settings more frequently selected *accommodation(s) used for instruction* than teachers in other settings.

Figure 5. Top Factors for Decision Making on Assessment Accommodations



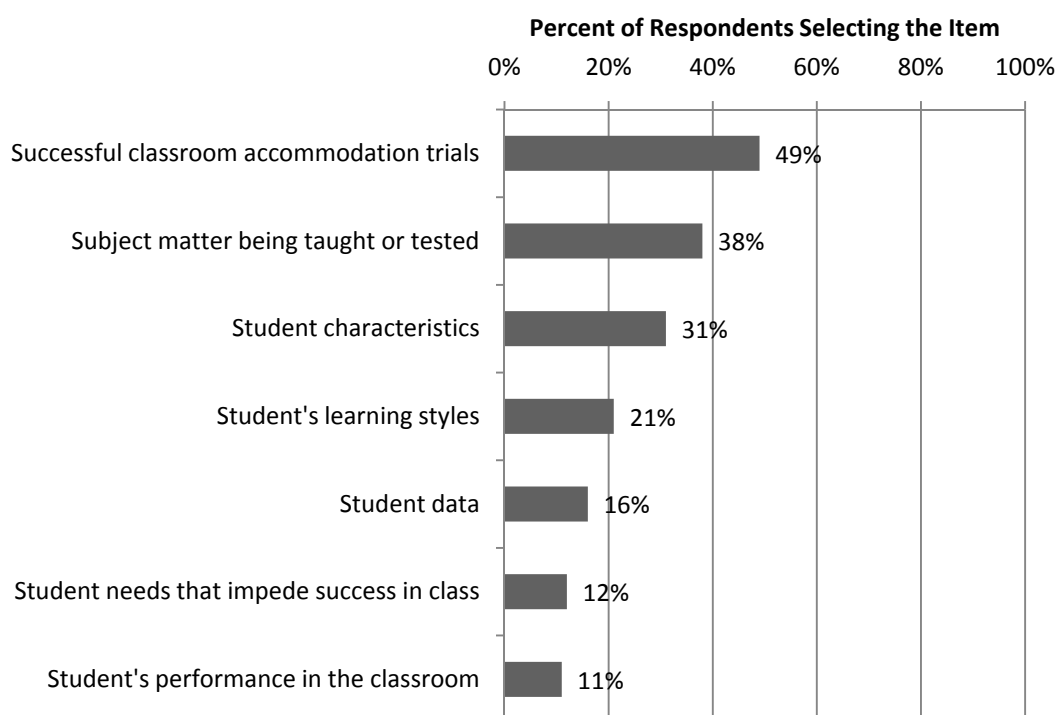
Respondents were asked to rank from 1 to 7 (with 1 being most important) the considerations used by the IEP team in determining appropriate assessment accommodations. If a respondent ranked the item 1 or 2, it was coded as “important.” As shown in Figure 6, 49% of the respondents selected *successful classroom accommodation trials*, and 38% selected *subject matter being taught or tested*, as important factors.

As shown in Table B5 in Appendix B, the only substantial difference between groups and the average response rate for all items was for teachers who taught in self-contained classrooms who selected *student characteristics* less frequently than teachers in other settings.

The questionnaire included a second scenario that pertained to the implementation of assessment accommodations. Specifically, the scenario involved a student who was new at the school and required testing accommodations. The teachers were asked how accommodations decisions would be made for this student. As shown in Figure 7 more than three-quarters of the respondents

indicated that the student would typically be *accommodated based on the IEP from previous school*. Sixty-three percent indicated that *previous school is contacted* to determine which accommodations are needed.

Figure 6. Considerations Reported by Respondents as Most Important in Making Assessment



Accommodations Decisions

As shown in Table B6 in Appendix B, the only substantial difference between groups of teachers and the mean response rate for each item was that respondents who taught in self-contained classrooms selected *call the central office* less often than teachers who taught in other settings.

Figure 8 lists the accommodations that the respondents indicated that their students used either always or frequently. Two-thirds of the teachers indicated that their students frequently or always had the *small group/individual administration* accommodation. About 50% of the teachers indicated that their students frequently or always had administration *by student's special education teacher*, *extended time limits* and *administration in the special education classroom*. About 40% indicated *preferential seating*.

Figure 7. Percent of Respondents Marking Specific Actions in Response to Assessment Scenario

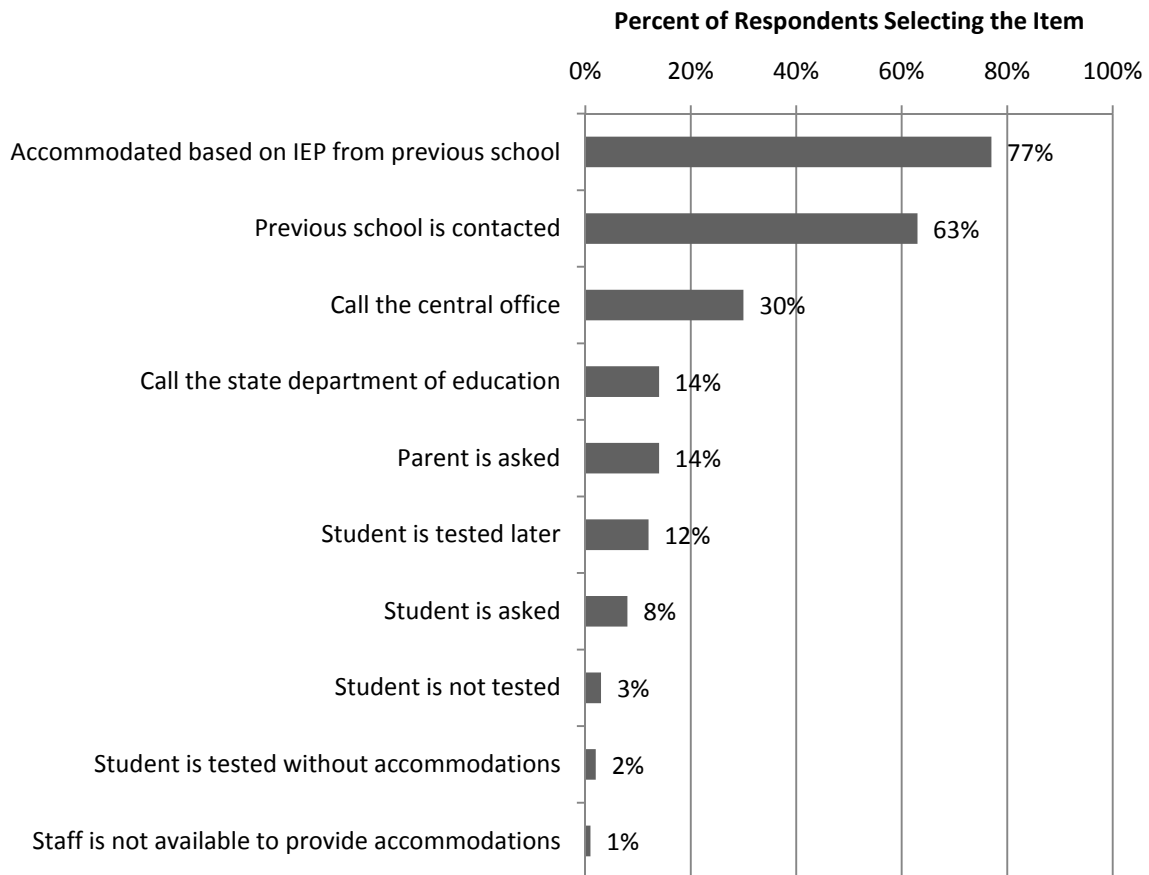
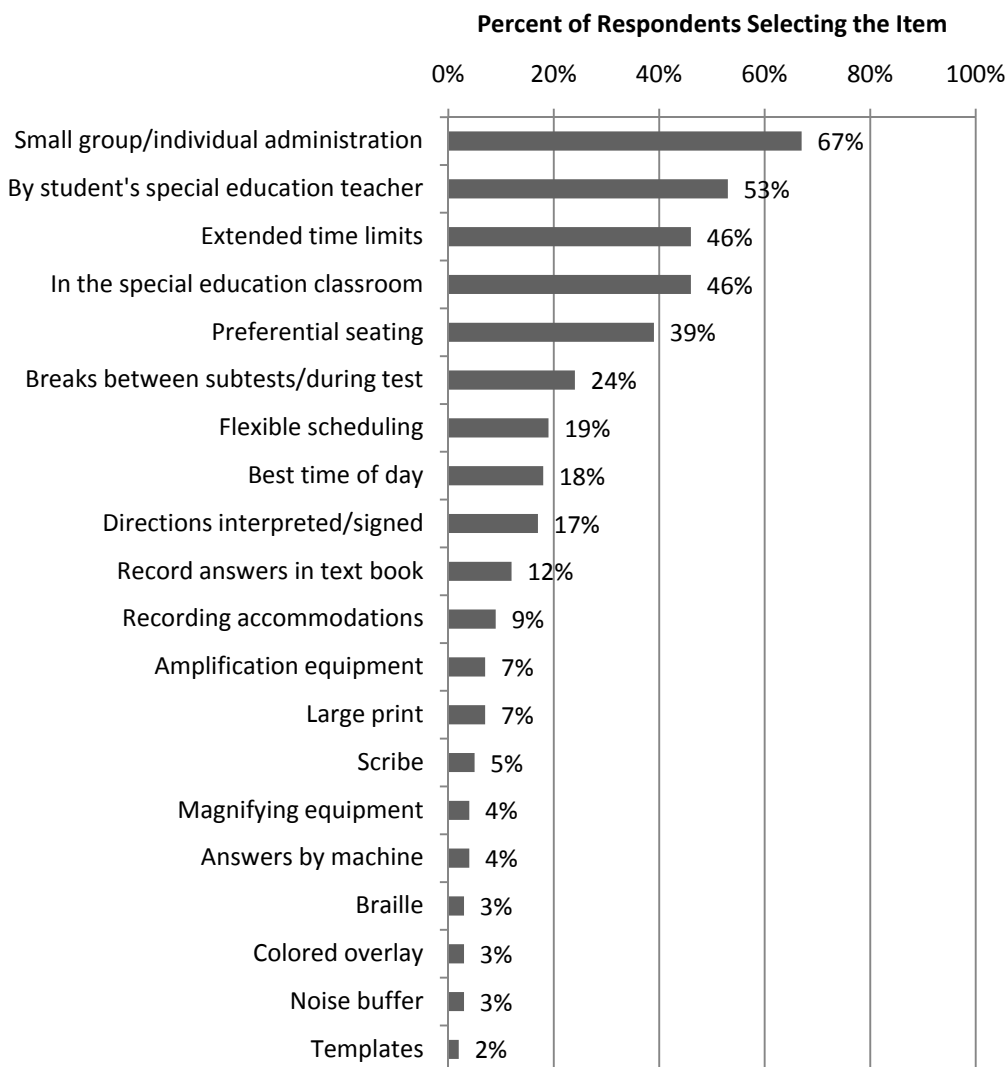


Table B7 in Appendix B presents detailed information about assessment accommodations used by the teachers in different classroom settings. A number of noteworthy deviations from the mean were seen between classroom settings, particularly for teachers in self-contained classrooms. Specifically, teachers in self-contained classroom were substantially more likely to select the following accommodations: *best time of day*, *breaks between subtests/during test*, *special education teacher*, *extended time limits*, *flexible scheduling*, *directions interpreted/signed*, *in the special education classroom*, *preferential seating*, *small group/individual administration*, and *recording accommodations*. Teachers in the resource room and co-teaching settings selected less frequently than average *best time of day* and *flexible scheduling*. Additionally, teachers in co-teaching settings selected less frequently than the population average *by student's special education teacher* and *in the special education classroom*. Respondents who were teachers in the general education classroom also selected *in the special education classroom* substantially less than the population average.

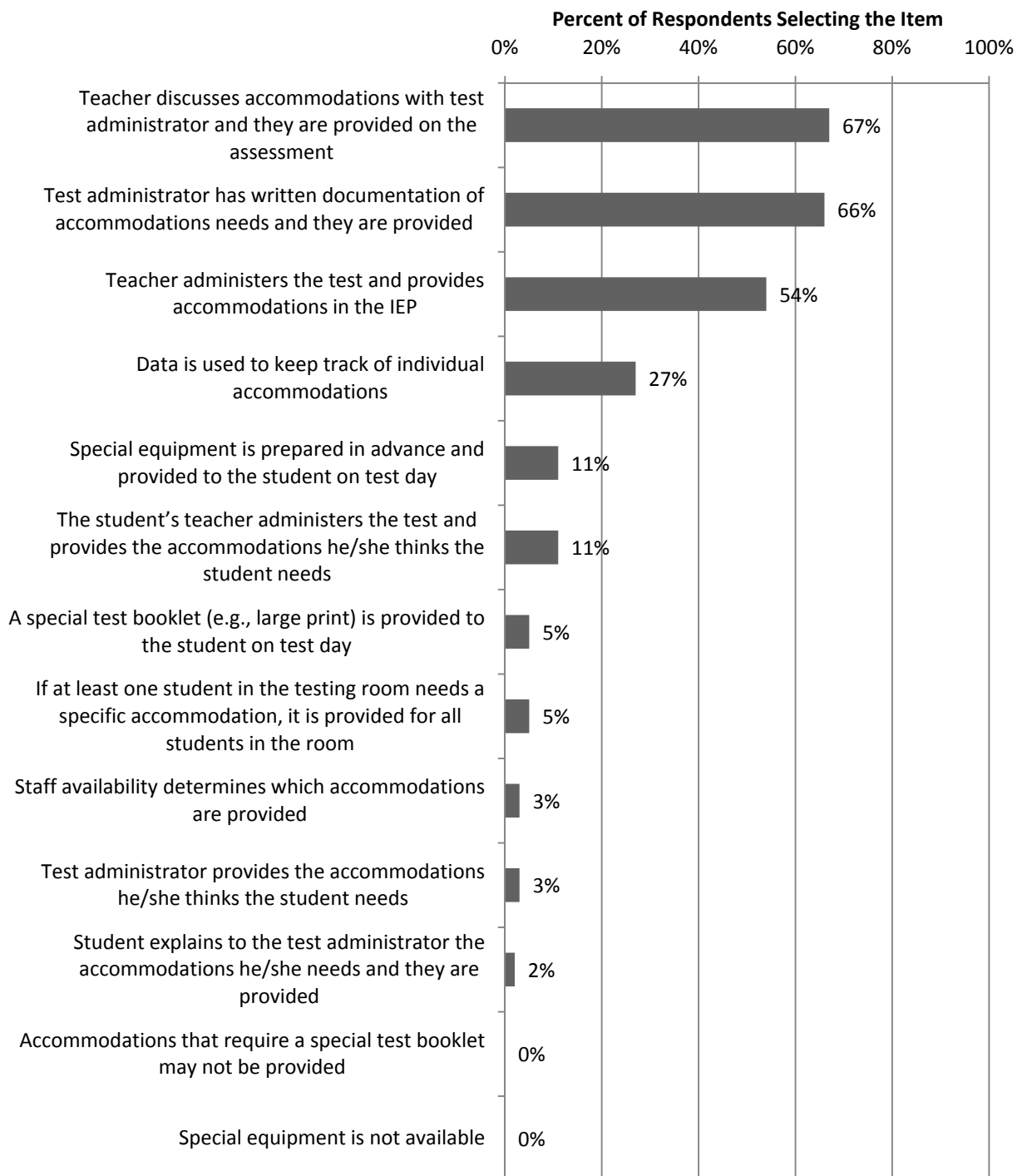
Figure 8. Percent of Respondents' Students Using Specific Assessment Accommodations



The survey asked respondents to mark the top three ways in which they ensured that students received the state assessment accommodations that are specified by the IEP. As shown in Figure 9, the responses selected by two out of three respondents were *teacher discusses the accommodations with test administrator and they are provided on the assessment* and *test administrator has written documentation of accommodations needs and they are provided*. Also more than half of the respondents indicated that the *teacher administers the test and provides accommodations in the IEP*. As with previous questions, because respondents made three selections, percentages sum to more than 100% in Figure 9.

According to Table B8 in Appendix B, respondents who taught in self-contained classrooms more frequently selected *the student's teacher administers the test and provides the accommoda-*

Figure 9. Percentage of Respondents Marking How Accommodations are Implemented on Test Day



tions he/she thinks the student needs, but selected test administrator has written documentation of accommodations needs and they are provided and special equipment is prepared in advance and provided to the student on test day substantially less than the special education teacher population average. Conversely, teacher discusses accommodations with the test administrator and they are provided on the assessment and test administrator has written documentation of accommodations needs and they are provided were selected more substantially more frequently than average by resource room teachers and co-teaching teachers, respectively.

Discussion

The Alabama special education teacher survey results provide insight into how IEP teams select instructional and assessment accommodations. There was wide variation across survey respondents in the factors considered when making accommodations decisions. For example, more than 57% of the survey respondents indicated that a key criterion considered by the IEP team in the instructional accommodations process for a student was *the student's present level of functioning*, whereas 28% identified the *difficulty of content standards being taught* as an important factor. These are generally considered to be sound criteria for IEP teams to consider (see for example, Crawford, 2007; Thurlow et al., 2006; Thurlow, Elliott, & Ysseldyke, 2003).

Forty-nine percent of the special education teachers indicated that assessment accommodations decisions were based on *successful classroom accommodations trials* during instruction, and thirty-nine percent of special education teachers identified the *subject matter being taught or tested* as an important consideration. According to Elliott and Thurlow (2006), it is appropriate to try accommodations to see which work for specific students. It is a concern that only a few teachers considered *student input* to be an important factor. Student input about how accommodations work provides important information that can be used during the process.

There may be a need for increased emphasis on the importance of state policies and federal regulations because only about one-third of the teachers indicated that they considered *state policies and guidelines* to be an important consideration when making assessment accommodations decisions. Teachers in self-contained classrooms were more likely to consider *student's disability classification* when making instructional and assessment accommodations decisions than teachers in other settings. According to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), accommodations decisions should not be based on a student's disability category (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, 2004).

The results of this study suggest that special education teachers are knowledgeable about accommodations, but may have some gaps in their knowledge about how to effectively select and implement accommodations for instruction and assessment. Local Education Agency (LEA) personnel need training on accommodations so teachers and IEP teams will have a better understanding of the process. There may also be a need for teacher preparation programs to provide training on accommodations decision making for pre-service special education and general education teachers.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Alabama Accommodations Survey

CONSENT INFORMATION

The Alabama State Department of Education (SDE) is seeking input from educators regarding the decision-making process for selecting and implementing instructional and assessment accommodations for special education students.

You will notice as you work through this survey that it is broken up into three sections: 1) general information, 2) instructional accommodations, and 3) state assessment accommodations. It will be important for respondents to keep in mind the differences between the various sections as they answer items. Specifically, an instructional accommodation is a practice or procedure intended to reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability in order to provide equitable access during instruction and on classroom assessments. A state assessment accommodation should enable the student with a disability to demonstrate the degree of achievement which he or she possesses. An accommodation cannot supplant the skill that the assessment is designed to measure.

When completing the survey please be sure to use the "prev" and "next" buttons on the page to navigate rather than the web browser's back and next buttons. Keep in mind, a response to each item in this survey is necessary in order to move forward to the next item. Also, you will be able to partially fill out the survey, close the browser, and come back to your saved version at any time. If doing so, be sure to exit the survey in the top right of the screen before closing so that your survey answers are saved. When you return, just follow the same link as before and you will resume at the place you left off, or if applicable the first question that you left unanswered.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the Alabama Department of Education, the National Center on Educational Outcomes, or the University of Minnesota. The primary contact for this survey is coordinator, Jason Altman. We encourage you to contact him at 612.624.8561, or altma014@umn.edu, regarding any and all questions that may arise during participation in the survey.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the research staff, you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455; 612.625.1650.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please complete the survey below. Your responses will assist the SDE in better understanding current practices in local education agencies (LEAs). The results will be used to provide targeted technical assistance on accommodations for students with disabilities. All responses will remain anonymous.

1. In what school system are you employed?

2. What is your primary professional role? (please select the most accurate response)

☐ Special Education Teacher

☐ Other

Comments:

Alabama Accommodations Survey

3. What is your school setting? (please select the most accurate response)

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Suburban
- ☐ Rural

Other (please specify)

4. What grade level do you teach? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ Early Childhood
- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Middle School/Junior High
- ☐ High School

Other (please specify)

5. In what context does your instruction take place? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ Regular Classroom
- ☐ Co-Teaching (Inclusion)
- ☐ Resource Room
- ☐ Self-Contained

Other (please specify)

INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

An instructional accommodation is a practice or procedure intended to reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability in order to provide equitable access during instruction and on classroom assessments.

Alabama Accommodations Survey

6. Select the top 3 factors that influence IEP Team decisions regarding instructional accommodations for special education students: (please select exactly three responses)

- ☐ Accommodations will facilitate access to general curriculum
- ☐ Difficulty of content standards being taught
- ☐ Documentation of accommodations on previous IEP
- ☐ Evidence of successful prior accommodations
- ☐ Feasibility of providing the accommodation
- ☐ Percent of time student spends in special education/general education settings
- ☐ School and staff resources
- ☐ Student is fully included
- ☐ Student is pulled for Special Education services
- ☐ Student's disability classification
- ☐ Student's learning style
- ☐ Student's present level of functioning
- ☐ Parental input
- ☐ Student input
- ☐ Teacher input
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

Comments:

Alabama Accommodations Survey

**7. What considerations are used by the IEP Team in determining appropriate accommodations for instructional purposes?
(Please rank in order of importance; 1 through 7 using each number once, with 1 being most important)**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Student needs that impede success in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student's learning styles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Subject matter being taught or tested	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student's characteristics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Successful accommodation after trials of different accommodations are conducted in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student's performance in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

Alabama Accommodations Survey

8. Ryan is having difficulty finishing his math assignments and is falling further behind his grade-level peers. There is no change in terms of his progress in other content areas. Ryan is included in fourth grade general education classes with special education support. Please read each response below and select the top three responses that best represent what you are most likely to do to improve Ryan's achievement in math. (please select exactly three responses)

- ☐ Change the delivery of instruction
- ☐ Convene IEP team meeting
- ☐ Encourage the student to pay more attention during math instruction
- ☐ Conduct an assessment of the student's present level of performance in math
- ☐ Meet with the student's parents to offer tips for helping the student at home
- ☐ Provide individualized intervention by special education teacher
- ☐ Provide math instructional accommodations
- ☐ Speak with the student to find the cause of his/her difficulties
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

Comments:

STATE ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

A state assessment accommodation should enable the student with a disability to demonstrate the degree of achievement that he or she possesses. An accommodation cannot supplant the skill that the assessment is designed to measure.

Alabama Accommodations Survey

9. Select the top 3 factors that influence IEP Team decisions about state assessment accommodations: (please select no more than three responses)

- ☐ Accommodation(s) proven successful in the classroom
- ☐ Accommodation(s) that a student uses for instruction and classroom tests
- ☐ Difficulty of content standards being assessed
- ☐ Feasibility of providing the accommodation(s)
- ☐ Improves the student's chances of passing the test
- ☐ Percent of time student spends in special education/general education settings
- ☐ State policies and guidelines
- ☐ Student's disability classification
- ☐ Student is fully included in the general education setting
- ☐ Student's present level of functioning
- ☐ Student is pulled out for special education services
- ☐ Parental input
- ☐ Student input
- ☐ Teacher input
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

Comments:

Alabama Accommodations Survey

10. Record the frequency with which your students use the following state assessment accommodations: (please select the most accurate response for each row)

1 - 5 = Scheduling Accommodations

6 - 9 = Setting Accommodations

10 - 16 = Format/Equipment Accommodations

17 - 19 = Recording Accommodations

	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
1. Best time of day	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Breaks between subtests/during test	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. By student's special education teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Extended time limits* (If allowed for specific assessments)	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Flexible Scheduling	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Directions interpreted/signed	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. In the special education classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Preferential seating	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Small group/individual administration	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Amplification equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Braille	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Colored overlay	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Large print	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Magnifying equipment	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Noise buffer	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Templates	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Recording Accommodations	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Answers by machine (e.g., computer)	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. Record answers in test booklet	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Scribe (excluding writing assessments)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

Alabama Accommodations Survey

11. How do you ensure students receive the appropriate state assessment accommodations that are specified in the student's IEP for the assessments? (please select exactly three responses)

- ☐ Special equipment (e.g., computer) is prepared in advance and provided to the student on test day
- ☐ The test administrator provides the accommodations he/she thinks the student needs
- ☐ The student's special education teacher administers the test and provides the accommodations documented in the student's IEP
- ☐ Data is used to keep track of individual accommodations
- ☐ The student's special education teacher administers the test and provides the accommodations he/she thinks the student needs
- ☐ Prior to the test date, the student's special education teacher discusses the accommodations with the test administrator and the accommodations are provided on the assessment
- ☐ Staff availability determines which accommodations are provided
- ☐ Accommodations that require a special test booklet may not be provided
- ☐ The test administrator has written documentation of student accommodations needs and the accommodations are provided
- ☐ If at least one student in the testing room needs a specific accommodation (e.g., directions read aloud), the accommodation is provided for all students in the room
- ☐ The student explains to the test administrator what accommodations he/she needs and the accommodations are provided
- ☐ Special equipment is not available
- ☐ A special test booklet (e.g., large print) is provided to the student on test day

Other (please specify)

Alabama Accommodations Survey

12. What considerations are used by the IEP Team in determining appropriate state assessment accommodations for state assessments? (Please rank in order of importance; 1 through 7 using each number once, with 1 being most important)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Student needs that impede success in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student learning styles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Successful accommodations after trials of different accommodations are conducted in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student characteristics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student's performance in the classroom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Subject matter being taught or tested	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)							

Alabama Accommodations Survey

13. Please respond to the following scenario: Today is the first day of testing at your school and a new student who needs specific assessment accommodations has enrolled. Please read each response below and select the responses that best describe what is most likely to happen. (please select all that apply)

- ☐ Student is asked
- ☐ Call the State Department of Education
- ☐ Parent is asked
- ☐ Student is tested without accommodations
- ☐ Call the Central Office
- ☐ Previous school is contacted to determine which accommodations are needed as specified in the student's current IEP
- ☐ Student is not tested
- ☐ Student is tested later
- ☐ Staff is not available to provide the accommodations
- ☐ Student is accommodated based on IEP from previous school

Other (please specify)

Appendix B

Results Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

Table B1. Top Factors for Decision Making on Instructional Accommodations, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self- Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Facilitate access to curriculum	47%	52%	52%	50%	36%
Difficulty of content standards being taught	28%	27%	29%	29%	28%
Documentation of accommodations on previous IEP	9%	8%	9%	8%	9%
Evidence of successful prior use of accommodations	36%	38%	38%	37%	33%
Feasibility of providing the accommodation	9%	8%	10%	9%	9%
Percent of time student is mainstreamed	8%	8%	7%	8%	10%
School and staff resources	8%	8%	7%	8%	9%
Student is fully included	5%	5%	7%	4%	3%
Student is pulled for special education services	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%
Student's disability classification	10%	11%	8%	8%	15%
Student's learning style	28%	24%	28%	29%	30%
Student's present level of functioning	57%	57%	55%	58%	62%
Parental input	10%	9%	8%	8%	18%
Student input	5%	5%	5%	5%	3%
Teacher input	14%	16%	14%	14%	14%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Table B2. Considerations Reported by Respondents as Most Important in Making Instructional Accommodations Decisions, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self-Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Student needs that impede success in the classroom	23%	24%	21%	23%	22%
Student's learning styles	34%	35%	35%	34%	32%
Subject matter being taught or tested	15%	14%	17%	15%	14%
Student's characteristics	51%	53%	53%	52%	50%
Successful classroom accommodation trials	25%	24%	24%	25%	26%
Student's performance in the classroom	12%	11%	11%	11%	16%
Student data	26%	26%	25%	25%	29%

Table B3. Percentage of Respondents Marking Specific Actions in Response to Instructional Scenario, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self-Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Change the delivery of instruction	34%	35%	35%	33%	36%
Convene IEP team meeting	23%	21%	21%	26%	19%
Encourage student to pay more attention during instruction	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Conduct an assessment of the student's present level of performance	38%	37%	34%	36%	44%
Meet with the student's parents and offer tips for at home	13%	12%	13%	12%	12%
Individualized intervention by teacher	63%	65%	65%	65%	61%
Provide math instructional accommodations	60%	62%	60%	61%	62%
Speak to student to find the cause of the difficulties	43%	43%	47%	43%	42%
Other responses	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%

Table B4. Percentage of Respondents Selecting Top Factors for Decision Making on Assessment Accommodations, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self- Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Accommodation(s) proven successful in class	44%	45%	45%	44%	44%
Accommodation(s) for instruction	62%	64%	66%	64%	55%
Difficulty of content standards being assessed	9%	7%	8%	9%	13%
Feasibility of providing the accommodation(s)	7%	8%	8%	7%	5%
Improves the student's chances of passing	24%	25%	25%	24%	23%
Percent of time student is mainstreamed	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%
State policies and guidelines	35%	37%	37%	36%	34%
Student's disability classification	13%	14%	10%	11%	16%
Student fully included in general education	5%	5%	6%	5%	3%
Student's present level of functioning	38%	36%	35%	39%	45%
Student is pulled out for special education	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Parental input	4%	4%	5%	5%	3%
Student input	3%	3%	5%	4%	2%
Teacher input	9%	8%	8%	9%	9%
Other	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%

Table B5. Percentage of Respondents Marking Specific Considerations Which Lead to Assessment Accommodations Decisions, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self-Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Student needs that impede success in the class	12%	10%	11%	12%	15%
Student's learning styles	21%	21%	21%	22%	21%
Student data	16%	16%	16%	15%	19%
Successful classroom accommodation trials	49%	52%	52%	52%	46%
Student characteristics	31%	30%	31%	31%	27%
Student's performance in the classroom	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%
Subject matter being taught or tested	38%	38%	38%	37%	37%

Table B6. Percentage of Respondents Marking Specific Actions in Response to Assessment Scenario, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self-Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Call the central office	30%	34%	32%	32%	27%
Call the state department of education	14%	15%	14%	15%	16%
Previous school is contacted	63%	64%	66%	65%	62%
Parent is asked	14%	13%	14%	12%	15%
Student is asked	8%	7%	8%	7%	8%
Staff is not available to provide the accommodations	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Accommodated based on IEP from previous school	77%	80%	80%	78%	76%
Student is tested without accommodations	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Student is tested later	12%	11%	9%	11%	14%
Student is not tested	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%

Table B7. Percentage of Respondents Using Specific Assessment Accommodations, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self- Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
Best time of day	18%	20%	12%	12%	31%
Breaks between subtests/ during test	24%	27%	22%	21%	30%
By students special education teacher	53%	51%	49%	51%	62%
Extended time limits	46%	49%	45%	43%	50%
Flexible scheduling	19%	19%	14%	15%	34%
Directions interpreted/signed	17%	19%	14%	14%	23%
In the special education classroom	46%	40%	40%	44%	58%
Preferential seating	39%	40%	36%	36%	44%
Small group/individual administration	67%	65%	67%	67%	71%
Amplification equipment	7%	6%	5%	5%	9%
Braille	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Colored overlay	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Large print	7%	7%	5%	6%	10%
Magnifying equipment	4%	4%	2%	3%	6%
Noise buffer	3%	2%	1%	2%	4%
Templates	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Recording accommodations	9%	7%	6%	6%	15%
Answers by machine	4%	3%	2%	3%	7%
Record answers in text book	12%	13%	11%	10%	12%
Scribe	5%	4%	3%	3%	7%

Table B8. Percentage of Respondents Marking How Accommodations are Implemented on Test Day, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self- Contained
Number of responses	2336	574	1192	1427	522
A special test booklet (e.g., large print) is provided to the student on test day	5%	6%	5%	6%	4%
Accommodations that require a special test booklet may not be provided	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Data is used to keep track of individual accommodations	27%	27%	27%	26%	27%
If at least one student in the testing room needs a specific accommodation is provided for all students in the room	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Teacher discusses accommodations with test administrator and they are provided on the assessment	67%	68%	70%	71%	61%
Special equipment is prepared in advance and provided to the student on test day	11%	10%	10%	10%	14%
Special equipment is not available	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Staff availability determines which accommodations are provided	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Student explains to the test administrator what accommodations he/she needs and they are provided	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
The student's teacher administers the test and provides the accommodations he/she thinks the student needs	11%	8%	9%	10%	16%
Teacher administers the test and provides the accommodations in the student's IEP	54%	56%	53%	53%	57%

Table B8. Percentage of Respondents Marking How Accommodations are Implemented on Test Day, Disaggregated by Classroom Setting (continued)

	Total	General Education Classroom	Co-Teaching (Inclusion)	Resource Room	Self- Contained
Test administrator has written documentation of accommodations needs and they are provided	66%	67%	70%	69%	59%
Test administrator provides the accommodations he/she thinks the student needs	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%

